

Adopted: March 24, 1944

File No. 3243-43

REPORT OF THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD  
on the  
Investigation of an Accident Involving Aircraft  
During a Cross-Country Practice Flight

Albert Francis Johns, age 42, was fatally injured in an accident which occurred about 4 miles northeast of Derry, Pennsylvania, at approximately 4:00 p.m. on August 1, 1943. Johns held a student pilot certificate which had not been endorsed for cross-country flying. He had accumulated about 17 hours of solo flight time. The aircraft, a Taylorcraft DC-65, NC 24384, owned by the pilot and J. C. Graham, was extensively damaged.

Johns secured clearance for a cross-country flight to Leechburg, Pennsylvania and took off from the New Alexandria, Pennsylvania Airport at approximately 3:45 p.m. He was observed a few minutes later in the vicinity of Derry, at an altitude of 200 to 300 feet, circling the home of friends and waving and shouting to them as he flew over their house. After several minutes of reckless flying the pilot headed back in the direction of New Alexandria, still at a low altitude. His friends did not see the flight thereafter but a few seconds later they heard a crash and located the aircraft in a wrecked condition on a hillside about 400 feet from their house. Evidence indicated that the plane had struck the ground at an angle of approximately 35°, bounced forward and stopped in an upright position.

Examination of the wreckage revealed no evidence of failure of any part of the aircraft prior to the accident and the manner in which the propeller was broken indicated that considerable power was being developed at the time of impact.

Johns displayed little or no regard for safety in his apparent effort to "show off" for the benefit of his friends on the ground and it appears that in so doing he inadvertently stalled the airplane at a low altitude.

The probable cause of this accident was recklessness and overconfidence on the part of the student pilot.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs  
Secretary